



RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Hausa Ethnicity: An Identity in Crisis?

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Abstract

The Hausa ethnicity has been undergoing identity crisis since pre-colonial days. It has assumed the status of a pan-ethnicity by subsuming peoples and cultures, transforming them into Hausa or at least Hausa-speaking. This is why the Hausa Race is grossly misunderstood even by members within the society. The introduction of the “Hausa-Fulani” identity by selfish northern politicians with Fulani bloodline in the early 1980s is the greatest miscalculation of the century. The “Hausa-Fulani” identity is only a segment of a segment of the Hausa society. Recognizing it in place of Hausa ethnicity by members will amount to committing a cultural suicide. This paper is therefore aimed at clearing misconceptions and correcting wrong impressions. It detects the deficiency of the imposed “Hausa-Fulani” identity as a replacement of Hausa ethnicity. It realizes that the imposed Hausa-Fulani conundrum does not only underrate the might of the Hausa pan-ethnicity but also ostracizes all other important composite identities through intermarriage with the Hausa e.g. Hausa-Kanuri, Hausa-Tuareg, Hausa-Babur, Hausa-Nupe,, Hausa-Gwari, Hausa-Jukun, etc. The paper recommends a banishing of the Hausa-Fulani collocation and identity except as a segment within the pan-ethnicity. The paper provides a comparative historical treat of Hausa and Fulani ethnicities in order to update the uninformed including those who created and imposed the “Hausa-Fulani” project.
Keywords: Hausa Pan-ethnicity Identity Crisis

1 | INTRODUCTION

ETHNICITY has been defined variously, and according to Oxford Dictionary of English, it is a community or population made up of people who share a common cultural background or descent. Ethnicity may also be regarded as a category of people who identify with each other based on similarities such as common ancestry, lan-

guage, society, culture or nation. HAUSA is one such ethnicity with a long history of socio-cultural transformation and development. The home of the Hausa people (Hausaland) is a region on the West African landmass located between what was in history known as ‘Western Sudan’ and ‘Central Sudan,’ now situated in northern Nigeria and southern Niger. Hausa language has historically been the lingua franca of northern Nigeria and most of Niger

Republic. It is widely spoken in the West African Sub-region (Nigeria, Benin Republic, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone and Cameroon) and elsewhere in Sudan and Saudi Arabia. The Hausa language has been broadcast over famous radio and television stations in Africa, Europe, the Americas and Asia. The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) has been broadcasting news and programmes in Hausa for over 50 years. No other African language except Swahili, has attained this status. In Nigeria, the second most important modern film industry after the English-based Nollywood is Kannywood which is based in Kano, and which uses the Hausa language as its medium of transmission. There are presently several other television stations, seen all over the world, broadcasting in Hausa. Examples are Arewa 24, ST Dadin Kowa, NTA Hausa, Farin Wata, Liberty TV, Tozali TV, Sunna TV and Manara TV. Hausa ethnicity with a long history of anthropological transformation and development has come of age. Unfortunately, it is probably the most misunderstood ethnicity in Nigeria today! Its capability to subsume other ethnicities and societies is also grossly misunderstood. Worst of all, it is embroiled in a sinister quagmire that may, God forbid, lead to its demise.

2 | THE "HAUSA-FULANI" CONUNDRUM

Sometime in 2017, TVC News Nigeria aired a program called Platform/ Big Talk with General Alabi Isama (Retired). The General focused on his northern contemporaries who ruled the country as heads of state or presidents, but instead of discussing their achievements or failures as expected, he talked about their ethnicities, observing that the Hausa ethnicity

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has not produced a single Head of State, President or Prime Minister in the history of this country. He continued to enumerate them one by one, explaining that they were not Hausa. It was a shocker because the same could not be said for any of the two other major ethnic groups in the country; Ibo and Yoruba. The War Veteran and retired General continued, mentioning three he identified as Fulani. One would normally expect the three to be able to speak Fulfulde fluently, but unknown to the General, none of them could even utter a complete sentence in Fulfulde. They all speak or spoke Hausa as a first language. General Isama was both right and wrong. He was right because that is the impression he got from the Hausa (or Fulani?) confusion. It is purported that some opportunistic northern politicians seeking self aggrandizement and domination, created the "Hausa-Fulani" enigma. They did this without any research or consultations on the history of ethnic alliances through intermarriages. Most of these elitist politicians with Fulani bloodline had been raised in elite surroundings, large cities of the country and even abroad. All their life they have been far away from the common people to know the real nature of the Hausa and Fulani. Perhaps they did not know that the Hausa had intermarried with other ethnicities long before the nomadic pastoralist Fulani arrived from the Lower Senegal, in the fifteenth to the sixteenth century. Selfishly and opportunistically they mystified and sanctified the Fulani ethnicity and prepared the ground for the debut of their creation- the new "Hausa-Fulani" identity which made a mysterious appearance in the early 1980s. It was all fake, an illusion and charade that could not and cannot have a rightful place in any recent or past literature and/or mappings in Human or Natural Geography. Nevertheless, they used political and financial influence to propagate the new injurious concept. A number of northerners glibly followed and began to address themselves as "Hausa-Fulani". Nowadays, a number of southern politicians, writers and other intellectuals have bought the idea and are trying to force it on us northerners by hook or by crook. There must be a catch somewhere! For example Falola *et al.* (2020) wrote: "there are three major ethnic groups in the country [meaning Nigeria]; the Hausa-Fulani, the Yoruba and the Igbo". Falola *et al.* (2020) were

wrong because the tiny so-called “Hausa-Fulani” identity cannot stand for the mighty Hausa ethnicity of today. General Isama should have known better. If you are looking for a pure Hausaman today, with Hausa-Hausa-Hausa genealogy then you have a very difficult task at hand. The retired General was wrong because the Hausa race of today has actually produced nine Heads of state or Presidents in this country. They are Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa (R.I.P), General Yakubu Gowon, General Murtala Ramat Mohammed (R.I.P), Alhaji Shehu Usman Aliyu Shagari (R.I.P), General Muhammadu Buhari, General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida, General Sani Abacha (R.I.P), General Abdussalami Abubakar and Alhaji Umaru Musa Yar’adua (R.I.P).

3 | THE HAUSA ETHNICITY: A MIXTURE OF MIXTURES

The confusion and misunderstanding about Hausa ethnicity is perhaps due to the fact that many people do not know that it has progressed and acquired a pan-ethnic status. This is quite a normal, natural anthropological phenomenon according to Barth (1969) and Cohen (1978). The potentialities of a pan-ethnicity were already noticed as far back as 1908, in early colonial days, by C.W. Orr who called it “The Hausa Race.” (Orr, 1908) Captain A.J.N Tremearne, F.R.G.S, F.R.A.I, Lecturer in Hausa at the University of Cambridge, also marveled at the way the Hausa race was engulfing and subsuming peoples and cultures and made this statement “It is almost impossible to say exactly what a Hausa is now, for he is admittedly a mixture of mixtures” (Tremearne, 1911) The phrase “mixture of mixtures” most importantly describes the very identity of the Hausa of the present and the future. Yusuf (2019) explains that the Hausa ethnicity is:

“a melting pot of cultures and traditions that contains large populations of people who originated from other minority or majority tribes of northern Nigeria, sometimes even of southern Nigerian origin.”

During his 2006 Ramadan Tafsir, Sheikh Ja’afar Mahmud Adam (May his soul rest in peace) gave the world a novel method of profiling the Hausa identity.

He described his genealogy as being “...in part Hausa, in part Kanuri and in part Fulani.” (Adam, 2006) This is quite a remarkable method of profiling ancestry that takes into cognizance grandparents and great grandparents of the individual. It can help resolve the “Hausa-Fulani” confusion as well as dispel narrow, parochial interests. Following Sheikh Ja’afar’s example, my own genealogy comprises of “two Hausa bloodlines; two Kanuri bloodlines; two Tuareg bloodlines; and two Fulani bloodlines,” that means 25% each of Hausa, Kanuri, Tuareg and Fulani, a “mixture of mixtures” indeed! Like Sheikh Ja’afar, I speak Hausa as a first language, and so my ethnicity or tribe is Hausa, not Hausa-Fulani. I usually emphasize the Kanuri paternal line based on Hausa-Muslim tradition and the patrilineal nature of the society. It is pertinent to note that the above characteristic is true for the greatest majority of Hausa speaking people across the world. For example the Premier of the defunct Northern Region Ahmadu Bello (Sardauna of Sokoto) was not more than 50% Fulani, and so was the first Prime Minister of Nigeria Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa. Both of them were part of the “mixture of mixtures.” They spoke Hausa as a first language, ate Hausa, dressed Hausa and behaved Hausa - they were without any doubt Hausa! The legendary Hausa singer Alhaji Mamman Shata Katsina was also part of the “mixture of mixtures” identity. He said in a song “sai wawa sai mahaukaci ke raina mafari” meaning only a fool will not honour his roots. Hausa society from the past to the present has always comprised of several tribal composites or “mixture of mixtures”, such as Hausa-Kanuri, Hausa-Tuareg, Hausa-Rumawa* (Romans), Hausa-Mallawa (Maliens), Hausa-Nupe, Hausa-Babur, Hausa-Gwari, Hausa-Jaba, Hausa-Kaje, Hausa-Igbira, Hausa-Jukun, Hausa-Igala, Hausa-Angass, Hausa-Birom, Hausa-Yoruba, etc. Anyone in doubt of the existence of these composites (“mixture of mixtures”) can investigate the ethnic composition of our major cities and towns today. The Hausa-Fulani grouping can and does exist in its own right just like other groupings but does not have the moral right to manipulate, dominate, admit or ostracize others. They do not have the moral right to decide who the Hausa can intermarry.

*People who came from Bahr Rum (Mediterranean sea) area specifically Rome, according to Rilwanu Charanchi (1999)

4 | EFFECTS OF ADOPTING THE "HAUSA-FULANI" IDENTITY

An ethnic group has a set of common distinguishing features which bind members together (Barkow, 1989) There are three distinguishing features in the cultural traits of the Hausa; language, attire and religion. Members use the Hausa language for communication. They wear the peculiar Hausa attire and are largely Muslims. The third feature, religion may vary. A few profess the Christian religion, just like in Arab and Fulani ethnicities. The most prominent feature however is the ability to speak the language. Membership usually cuts across social status. The infeasibility of the Hausa-Fulani project is that majority cannot speak or understand Fulfulde. They listen to media broadcasts in Hausa, they were taught in schools as pupils in Hausa, all the films they watch from Nollywood are in Hausa. Some prayers and forms of worship in mosques and churches are conducted in Hausa, not in Fulfulde. Is it wise to drop Hausa for Fulfulde? In Nigeria, Fulfulde is mostly spoken well in Adamawa, Taraba, Bauchi and Gombe states. In the northwestern geopolitical zone (Kano, Katsina, Jigawa, Zamfara, Sokoto, Kebbi) however, the fewer members speak only a diluted form of Fulfulde which is about 25 to 50% Hausa. Is it wise in this context to drop Hausa for Fulfulde? Hausa language is the most widely spoken and developed languages in West Africa, with vast linguistic infrastructure and enviable expert indigenous and expatriate human resource and capital. Isn't it unwise and ungrateful to discard all these achievements, progress and development, for a smaller minority language that is far less developed and that greatest majority can't even speak? We will surely be a laughing stock of our rival major ethnicities in the country! The second important distinguishing feature in an ethnicity which binds members together is their attire. There is no contention in this one because the nomadic pastoralist Fulani did not have any particular attire of their own in history. They adopted

theirs from the Hausa. As for religious inclination, both strike a similarity. Majority of the Hausa and Fulani are Muslims. There are only a few Hausa Christians, two percent according to Joshua Project (Barkow, 1973). Likewise there are only a few Fulani Christians. The effects of adopting a Hausa-Fulani identity will undoubtedly involve parochialism, favoritism and promotion of Fula society, language and customs while unfairly denigrating the Hausa society and culture. The Hausa race would be seen as an opponent because its catchment area is the same and the people are the same. The result is a belittling of Hausa language and culture, and these have already begun. Many people have developed I-don't-care attitude about the Hausa language. It's no more passionate to speak well, fluently, perfectly in Hausa. Hausa grammar and etymology are disrespected, even by Muslim clerics who show off their know-how in Arabic grammar and literature. Some fluent speakers of English also tend to pretend not knowing Hausa well whereas their great grandparents spoke it well. The general attitude of people towards the Hausa language is somewhat lackadaisical ("rikon sakainar kashi"). This attitude may not be unconnected with insinuations from the Fulanisation Movement or other adversaries. While Hausa language and culture are being embroiled in this no-good "Hausa-Fulani" conundrum, Ibo and Yoruba languages are waxing stronger.

Another problem is the marginalization of Hausa names. A careful look at names of young people in their twenties and below in Hausaland would reveal this fact. Out of sheer timidity or inferiority complex, Hausa names are being discarded. Some uninformed clerics think that the names are animist names. They fail to draw a line between animism and the non-animist society. They overlook other tribal names such as typical Fulani names, e.g. Gorjo, Bommi, Bimbi, Bingyal, Gwajam, Ja'e, Joni, Jobbi, etc, but frown at typical Hausa names. If their basis is Islam, then they are wrong. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) forbade bad names; confusing names, queer names, funny names, nicknames, names connoting terror, names connoting disrespect, dishonor, disbelief, animism, idolatry, etc. Good names must not necessarily be Arabic. In Turkey, Muslims still bear Turkish names. In Iran, Muslims

still bear Iranian names. In India and Pakistan, Muslims still bear Indian names. In Indonesia, Muslims still bear Indonesian names. In Yorubaland, Muslims still bear Yoruba names. In Borno, Muslims still bear Kanuri, Shuwa or Babur names. In Adamawa and other places, Muslims still bear typical Fulani names. Did Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) specifically forbid Hausa names? No. he didn't, therefore these clerics must be wrong. For example, what is wrong with "Ci-wake" (one born during beans blossom) if the Arab names his daughter "Yasmin" (blossoming flower)? What is wrong with "Zaki" (Lion) if the Arab also names his son "Al-Asad (same lion)? What is wrong with "Gwanda" or "Rabo" (one born during the parent couple's dispute) if the Arab calls his child "Saddam" (meaning accident, i.e. one born during couple's dispute)? What is wrong with "Damisa" if an Arab also calls his son "Fahd" (Tiger)? What is wrong with "Dan-Amale" if the Arab names his son "Faisal" (the camel, for its strength and submissiveness)? What is wrong with other Hausa names such as Bisalla, Jatau, Tanko, Magawata, Badamaye, Bahago, Kande, Shakallo, Shadari, Shagumba, Buwai, Gagare, Uwani, Maidamma, Dawai, Tinau, Hanau, Nomau, Kosau and Jimrau, if they do not connote the undesirables?

5 | HAUSA AND FULANI AND THE ANIMISM QUESTION

In a dialogue on the Hausa-Fulani project, a colleague confessed that he and many others preferred to identify with the Fulani ethnicity rather than compromise the animism ("maguzanci" or "maguzawa") factor prevalent in Hausa ethnicity. His submission was actually a shock because one did not expect the learned colleague to be ignorant of the fact that animism is not peculiar to Hausa ethnicity. Animism is universal and part of the natural anthropological stages that every society, tribe or ethnicity goes through, right from the early man to hunter gatherer to some kind of a stone-age man to an animist. Animism is synonymous with paganism or polytheism, the worship of many gods. The daftness of the colleague in this matter was amazing. To buttress the point that animism is not peculiar to the Hausa, a trip

to the banditry zones of Katsina state was suggested. The colleague would have the opportunity to see pagan Fulani bandits at work; killing innocent peasants, pillaging valuables, raping women and destroying crops by arson, not in the historical past but right here in the present. According to Kperogi (2017), cattle-herding Fulanis are mostly neither Muslims nor Christians. That means they are heathens or pagans. A Fulani friend from Adamawa state once condemned the "Udawa" (a clan of the Fulani) as pagans who were neither Muslims nor Christians. He recalled the manner in which they mercilessly massacred other bucolic (or settled) Fulani in parts of Bauchi and Gombe states in 2003. My colleague and the likes of him fail to reckon with history and anthropology and realize that all ethnicities, tribes or nations were at some time in their life cycles animists. Before the advent of Islam in the seventh century, the Jews used to call the Arabs animists. The religion was polytheism and about 313 gods were worshipped in Mecca. Islam, a monotheistic religion put a stop to all that. The Caliph Umar bn al Khattab (R.A.) used to weep whenever he remembered a bad day in Quraish animism. The day he buried his own daughter alive! Therefore animism is not an exclusive preserve for the Hausa. Both Hausa and Fulani were animists in the past, though some still are.

There is a need at this juncture to explain the historical origin of the animism trait among the Hausa and Fulani. Some comparative history of both ethnicities could be cited.

The Hausa are said to have originated from Ethiopia, or "Habesha," somewhere around the first century or before. The name "Habesha" was transformed to "Hausa," representing the ethnicity as well as the language. According to Late Danmasanin Kano (Alhaji Yusuf Maitama Sule) and Late Malam Aminu Kano (Veteran Politician and Elder Statesman), linguistic evidences support this legend. The Hausa language belongs to the West-Chadic, Afro-Asiatic branch of languages with affinity to Ethio-Semitic languages of Africa. The Bayajida Legend in Hausa culture may be regarded not as explanation of the origin of the Hausa but as that for the formation of the seven Hausa States ("Hausa Bakwai") and their satellites ("Banza Bakwai") The former are Daura, Katsina

,Kano, Gobir, Rano, Biram (Hadejia) and Zazzau while the latter are Gwari, Nupe, Kebbi, Kororofa (Jukun), Yawuri, Yoruba (Ilorin) and Zamfara. Hausaland or “Kasar Hausa” was an agrarian economy with a powerful kingship institution. Before the introduction of Islam, Hausaland went through a gradual process of political and cultural evolution based on organised settlements in walled cities (“birane”) One of the largest settlements, Kano was founded by Bagauda in 999 AD. Other “birane” included Katsina, Daura, Gobir (Alkalawa), Zazzau, Gozaki, Rano and Biram (Hadejia). Between the ninth and the eleventh centuries, the “birane” saw a number of stages of institutional and dynastic changes that produced a political culture that Yusuf Bala Usman called “the Sarauta system” (Usman, 1981). This development led to the emergence of the Seven Hausa States and seven other satellite states. Over time, the Hausa states went through a gradual infrastructural change that strengthened their political and military capability. Some of the states, especially Daura, Kano, Katsina and Zazzau, became strong political units with centralised political institutions at the end of the fourteenth century (Smith, 1964) Hausa societies are predominantly Muslim and had been so since the thirteenth century when Kanuri speaking people from Bornu Empire and Wangarawa (Bambara, Malinke, Soninke and Senufo) from Mali Empire introduced and converted them to Islam (Palmer, 1908; Greenberg, 1960; Adeleke, 2005). However those who refused to accept Islam retained their traditional pagan religious beliefs and are often referred to as “Maguzawa” Although they were despised, there was no caste system among the Hausa (Greenberg, 1960). The term is said to come from the Arabic “Majus,” hence “Majusawa” but it is not so. Temple (1919) in Haour and Rossi (2010) described the Maguzawa as descendants of “Maguji” the miner and smelter and one of eleven pagan chiefs who originally led the clans of Kano. Pagan practices included black magic or fetish (“tsafi”) and use of iskoki cults, pouring wine and animal blood on stone altars. Several gods and goddesses were worshipped e.g. Magiro or Bagiro on Kwatarkwashi hill (Zamfara state); Tsumburbura on Dala and Gwauron Dutse hills (Kano) and Pilgrimage at Kufena and Turunku (Zazzau). They also

engaged in “dabo” a mystical animation-like theatre where the characters were miniature living beings. Abdullahi (2016) and the Joshua Project (Barkow, 1973), limit the location of the Maguzawa to only Kano and Katsina. This is not true, they are actually found all over the historic Hausa Bakwai states and their satellites. Folkloric evidence may be found in Dan Anache’s “Wakar Shago”

The name “Maguzawa” is both a generic term for “pagan” and an ethnonym for religious designation (Osewe and Musa, 2018) However, according to Islamic standard, it must never be used on any follower of a monotheistic religion, e.g. Islam, Christianity or Judaism. Nevertheless, out of widespread misuse, the name has acquired a derogatory status and should be banned. The history of the stigma or label of “Maguzawa” or “Maguzanci” can be traced to the extreme hatred of those early Hausa Muslims for their pagan counterparts.

During the 1804 Jihad led by Usman dan Fodio, the Hausa Jihadists were overzealous and always worried about and discussed their pagan segment; the Maguzawa (Zehnle, 2015; Rossi, 2019) Because the Hausa were a talkative calumnious type they made so much fuss that the issue became so publicised. No doubt they suffered from a persistent hate syndrome that may be called “Maguzanci/Maguzawa-phobia.” They even made attempts without success, to reclassify the Maguzawa into a separate ethnic group (Barkow, 1973). It was excessive, even the Arabs did not try to create a separate ethnic group for their animists. The Yazidis in Iraq are suitable examples. The attempt to create a separate ethnic group for the Maguzawa was unethical and illegitimate, but it managed to survive up to the present day as found in some folkloric evidences:

- Garkuwa Katsina poetic chants on the tribes of Nigeria
- The legendary Mamman Shata’s song: “Baban Kabiru Maikudi Maska”

The Fulani (Fulbe, Fula, Peul) are a minority ethnic group wherever they may be found in West and Central Africa (Nigeria, Niger, Mali, Guinea,

Cameroon, Central African Republic, Gambia, Senegal, etc). Their language (Fulfulde) belongs to the Senegambian branch within the Niger – Congo family of languages with affinities to Wolof and Serer (Arnott, 2003) They are a nomadic pastoralist society generally unclad save for a piece of animal skin wrap (“walki” or “warki”) around the waist. The males would usually carry a long herding stick and a sword or dagger for self-defence. Their whole life revolved around cattle herding, which is often prone to violence, thuggery and thievery. Nomadic pastoralists are like this even today. Kperogi (2017) says “their whole religion is usually just the welfare of their cattle” This is animism and in this regard the Fulani animists (Fulani-Arna) are no better than the Hausa animists (Maguzawa). In fact they are even worse because the latter are more peace-loving. One wonders why the latter, whom the former labelled as “Arnan Gona” by virtue of their industriousness and love for farming, did not return a similar label, animists-to-animists, “Arnan Shanu” for the former’s love and ‘worship’ of cattle.

The existence of the “Fulani-Arna” is shown in folkloric evidence –a tune from the traditional boxing (“dambe”) house in Kankia, in the late 1960s, by Ya’u Makadin Maza, thus:

“Gorjo dan Fulani-Arna
Jarumi na Mai-Musawa
Gorjo ya kashe ya tayar
Sai a bashi kambun girma”

Owing to their nomadic way of life the pagan Fulani did not settle enough to create gods and goddesses for worship. The “Bori cult” was described as a pre-Islamic traditional religion of the Hausa people (Danfulani, 1999; Besmer, 1977; Sullivan, 2015) However, considering the terminology and other ingredients of the cult, Bori is purely a Fulani phenomenon. It is a possession trance ritual which employs adoricism (cf exorcism) to heal illness. I vividly recall as a boy in the late 1960s, these slender Mbororo women with their big dangling circular metallic earrings dancing to a trance. They would also be chanting the epithets like a mantra; “Ye...yero...dan Babule ..yero,...ye ...yero...dan Babule ...yero” and “nabbi inabba nabban Joda...

nabbi inabba nabban Joda” The pantheon of spirits invoked and the gods and goddesses are purely Fulani; “Inna” (Mother of All), “Mainakada,” “Dan Babule” and “Barahaza” (‘yar Fulani mai kokuna) Folkloric evidence of the latter can be found in Alhaji Mamman Shata’s song “Sarkin Bori Sule.”

Another vice led by Fulani priestesses is the “Danko” cult. The priestesses would pretend to communicate with spirits in the spirit world so that solutions or healing could be obtained for their clients.

Fulani clans like the “Hemaga:” also engaged in other traditional, cultural games.

In the late 1960s the Hemaga would periodically hold a kind of festival or carnival also called Hemaga on market days of rural areas then, such as Kankia, Dutsinma and Charanchi. It was a snatchers’ carnival where the Hemaga would snatch anything in their sight; food, money, jewelry, cakes, whatever, and dash off. They wore nothing but a piece of animal skin wrap (“walki”) around the waist. Their heads carried horrible hair-dos consisting of islands of kinky tufts of hair (“tukkaye”) dotting the centre of the head from the back to the front. Long circular metallic earrings dangled from their ears. Each man carried a small drum (“talle”) which they played and sang in chorus:

“Dan marakinmu ya fi Maigidanmu..
dan marakinmu ya fi Maigidanmu..
dan marakinmu ya fi Maigidanmu ”

From the dialogue with the colleague mentioned earlier, it was gathered that many people are ignorant about our history and just believe that the Hausa were nothing, that the Fulani conquered them and brought them Islam and civilization. This is not true. The truth is that by the time the nomadic pastoralist Fulani came to Hausaland from the lower Senegal (Futa Toro/Futa Djalon) in the fifteenth to sixteenth century and started to convert to Islam, the Hausa were already settled, civilized and Islamized for over three centuries. Yoo (2009) confirmed that by 1200 AD, all the Hausa city states had Muslim rulers. The claim that Muhammadu Korau (c. 1450 - 1493) was the first Muslim king of Katsina is also false. The earliest conversion of the Hausa to Islam was by Kanuri-speaking people from Bornu empire

(Adamu, 1978 ; Alkali and Usman, 1983; Adeleke, 2005), and then by the “Mallawa” or Malians who came at first as traders, and secondly as Muslim scholars. According to Mahdi Adamu, the Malians were collectively called “Wangarawa” and consisted of the tribes of Bambara, Malinke, Soninke and Senufo. Claims by some that the Fulani were among them are false because by that time the Fulani had not even started to convert to Islam (Palmer, 1928; Yoo, 2009; Zehnle, 2015)

Therefore, the earliest people to embrace Islam in what is now Nigeria were Kanuri speaking people followed by Hausa and lastly the Fulani, The 1804 Jihad in Hausaland met a society already made or perfected. There was nothing the Fulani Jihad leadership under Sheikh Usman Dan Fodio could offer in terms of infrastructural facilities, tools or amenities of life. They did not have them. With the success of the Jihad, they inherited virtually everything, from the institutional structures of government, political titles, the elaborate court ceremonial /feudal social relations and even the hereditary principle of succession (Adeleke, 2005), to the army, weapons, extensive agriculture, trade and commerce, fishing, mining, black smithing, textiles and weaving, dyeing, modes of clothing and dressing (e.g. ‘taguwa,’ ‘tagiya,’ ‘riga,’ ‘yar-shara,’ e.t.c), games and sports, folk medicine, to even dish varieties and styles of their preparation. The minority Fulani nobility intermarried with the Hausa extensively such that it is hard to get the original pure Fulani but hybrids (“Fulanin zaure”) Most of the northern elites who are parading themselves as Fulani nobility, including those who created the Hausa-Fulani collocation cum confusion, are grand children or great grand children of those early minority Fulani nobility. They are part and parcel of the “mixture of mixtures” and they better be Hausa for a collective meaningful progress and development.

During the 1804 Jihad, only the leadership was purely Fulani but the men, the rank and file, were largely Hausa. The Jihad was usually tagged “Fulani Jihad” by colonialist and neo-colonialist historians as well as other opponents in order to trivialize the cause. In terms of proportions, numbers and principles however, it wasn’t truly a Fulani Jihad. Majority of the Hausa commoners “talakawa” joined in order

to topple their Hausa overlords (“Sarakuna”) who imposed on them heavy taxation and harsh economic conditions. At the time of the Jihad, many pagan transhumant pastoral Fulani bandits (Fulani-Arna) infiltrated the Jihadi Army for their selfish lust to kill and plunder. The evidence of this incident can be shown from the extremely angry reactions of a great commandant of the Jihad Abdullahi bin Fodio (Abdullahin Gwandu) in his book “Infaqul Maisuri.” Little wonder that the great grandchildren of those bandits are still wreaking havoc in Katsina, Zamfara, Sokoto, etc, by way of banditry, rustling, kidnapping and plunder. My colleague still wondered why many people associate animism only with the Hausa despite the fact that animism was and still is prevalent among the Fulani community. The answer is simple. The early Hausa Muslims especially those who participated in the 1804 Jihad overzealously despised their animist counterparts (Maguzawa). They were even stupidly less tolerant than the Arabs. In addition they were (or still are) a talkative, calumnious people who made the issue assume an almost global dimension (Zehnle, 2015; Rossi, 2019) The Fulani on the other hand, are more reserved. They saw their animism issue as an internal affair not worthy of discussion with strangers. Unlike the Hausa, they never ever contemplated creating a separate ethnic group for their animists. Before launching the 1804 Reform-Jihad, Sheikh Usman dan Fodio had two goals. The first was to convert the multitudes of pagan Fulani to Islam. The second was to execute the Jihad. (Zehnle, 2015) When he could not make any significant head way with the first, he settled for the Jihad. Apart from the terms “Maguzawa” or “Maguzanci,” several other terms are derogatory and should be banned. They include the segregative Fulani terms; “Habe” (Ugly Non-Fulani) and “Kado” (Non-Fulani). The Hausa used the term “Baubawa” (Non-Hausa) the plural of which is “Baibayi.” Southern Hausa also use another term specifically for the Fulani, i.e. “Agwoi” In the northeast, the term “Kirde” is used for an unbeliever or sometimes even for the Non-Kanuri.

My colleague thought that our discourse has somehow discredited the Fulani. I had to point out to him that it is not so, that I love the Fulani just like I love the others in my genealogy. After all, I have in my

“mixture of mixtures” profile two Fulani bloodlines; one from a paternal great grandmother, the other from a maternal great grandmother.

However, in good conscience the true history of all must be told. Both the discourse and the write up are as much as possible fair to all and in good conscience. According to Sheikh Usman dan Fodio, conscience is an open wound, only truth can heal it (The Guardian, 2019)

6 | RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the current critical challenges facing the Hausa ethnicity, challenges that amount to crisis in its identity; challenges that could bring about its demise, or drive it to extinction, the following recommendations are made:

1. Halt the use of the collocation “Hausa-Fulani” wrongfully used in place of the Hausa ethnicity, while incorporating it into the pan-ethnic complex just like other groupings e.g. Hausa-Kanuri, Hausa-Babur, Hausa-Tuareg, Hausa-Nupe, Hausa-Gwari, Hausa-Jukun, Hausa-Yoruba, etc.
2. Reverse the ugly trend of alienation of Hausa language and custom and restore its enviable status
3. Sensitize the various pan-ethnic groupings within the Hausa race and promote unity and cooperation without regard to background and religious inclination.
4. Encourage and promote understanding of History of peoples and places in Africa and the world
5. Encourage the formation of clubs, societies and non-governmental organizations for promoting Hausa language and culture.
6. Expose any related issues ‘cooled’ by Conspiracy of Silence and beware of Conspiracy of Silence. Conspiracy of Silence was used to kill a century-old history of Dallazawa Rule in Katsina.

7 | CONCLUSION

It is pertinent to note that there is a conspiracy behind the recently created Hausa-Fulani enigma. The informally proposed Hausa-Fulani identity was meant to stand in place of the Hausa Race. That must not be allowed to happen for the sake of fairness and justice. The future of composite groupings other than the Hausa-Fulani would be jeopardized. Worst of all, the Hausa Race would be deceived and cajoled to commit Cultural suicide! There are already sinister moves to drive the Hausa ethnicity and civilization into extinction. The immediate suspects may involve those behind the Fulanisation Movement as well as the immediate past Government of President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan for its calculated attempt, according to Unongo (2014) to divide the North and dismember Nigeria.

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